



Child Welfare Services Montgomery County Maryland

Annual Report 2003

Safe children, Stable families, Strong communities



CHILD WELFARE SERVICES 2003 ANNUAL REPORT

VISION STATEMENT

A future in which children are safe, families are stable, and communities are strong.

MISSION STATEMENT

To protect children, preserve families, strengthen communities, and ensure permanency for every abused and neglected child in Montgomery County.

GOALS

- › Provide child-centered, family-focused, and community-oriented services that adhere to national accreditation standards of best practice.
- › Create a work environment that attracts and retains competent and diverse staff and promotes professional development and leadership.
- › Advocate for the provision of essential services to children and families.

CHILD WELFARE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

This has again been a very productive year, but was also one with numerous challenges. Many children and families experienced what seem to be ever more complex family problems. This year we saw a large number of teenagers, in particular, who were experiencing a variety of difficulties that all required resources that were in short supply or non-existent. Out of home placement options for this population remains very limited.

We are very fortunate that the new leadership at both the State and local levels are extremely supportive of our work. We are also very pleased that we were able to recruit a large cadre of high- quality professional staff who brought even more energy, enthusiasm, and dedication to the work of child protection.

We continued to develop our comprehensive approach to protecting children from maltreatment. A series of new community partnerships and support from community agencies helped provide high- quality, needed services for children and their families. We also continued to improve our internal practices in order to make our child protection system more responsive – one that provides individualized services, instead of a “one-size-fits-all” approach.

During the coming year we will continue to identify best practices and spread them throughout the agency, reflecting our determination to provide ever-more effective responses when a child is abused or neglected, or in danger of being maltreated. We will also continue to work toward more community - based approaches to child protection, developing more and stronger partnerships with other organizations who share responsibilities for protecting children and strengthening families.

CHILD WELFARE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Assessing Children and Families

The Screening Unit is the single point of entry for all Child Welfare cases. This unit receives and processes all referrals of suspected child abuse and neglect, and other requests for services.

9,295 telephone calls were received during FY'03, increase of 10% over last year.

The Assessment Units investigate reports of alleged child abuse and neglect and evaluate the need for services to ensure child safety and promote preservation of the family.

2,656 families were investigated, involving 5,691 children. The number of new investigations varied from month to month with a high of 266 in May and a low of 174 in December. Neglect investigations continued to exceed abuse investigations by 16%.

Preserving Families

Family Preservation units provide time-limited, intensive, home-based services to families in crisis when children are at risk in out-of-home placement due to abuse or neglect.

An average of 71 families a month were served in the County, involving an average of 189 children. 97% of the children remained in their home.

Continuing Protective Services

Home-based services are provided to families where abuse or neglect has occurred, yet imminent danger is no longer present and the family is intact.

A monthly average of 325 children were served. These children were maltreated but remained in their homes receiving frequent monitoring and a variety of services from CWS staff.

Placements Out of the Home

Foster Care services provide case management and permanent planning for children who are in out-of-home placements. Reunification services are offered to families to reduce the length of time children remain in foster care. Interventions are aimed at improving family functioning and if that is not possible, the focus becomes other permanent placements for children.

There was an average of 432 children in out-of-home placement during the year. 170 were new entries into out-of-home care.

An average of 214 children lived in foster homes; 45 children lived with relatives. 173 children lived in group or residential care.

Youth Receiving Independent Living Services

The Independent Living Program prepares older foster children for the transition from foster care to independent living.

There were 167 youth between the ages of 16 and 21 who received Independent Living services.

Adoptions

Adoption services help prepare children for placement in a permanent family situation.

CWS met adoption program targets for the fourth year in a row with 31 children being finalized in their adoptive placements in FY 03.

There is an average of 68 children waiting for finalization of adoption. More than 550 children received post-adoption subsidies.

Foster and Adoptive Homes CWS staff recruits, trains, and supervises foster and adoptive parents for children who cannot be cared for by their own families.

CWS maintained 319 approved foster and pre-adoptive homes, of which 70 were newly licensed this year.

Court Activity Out-of-home placements and complex cases of abuse and neglect are under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Court. In all there were 1,589 hearings held which was a decrease of 26% over last year. The reduction was due to negotiated settlements through the new mediation process in a significant number of cases. There were 414 CINA shelter hearings held (Child in Need of Assistance), a decrease of 2% from last year.

Budget and Administration The FY03 budget for Child Welfare Services totaled \$14,823,950 and 187.2 workyears. State funds represent approximately 75% and county funds represent approximately 25% of the total budget. In addition to funds designated for personnel and basic operating expenses, the State allocates flexible and/or special purpose funds for a variety of services such as family preservation, preparing youth for independent living, child care for foster parents and relative caretakers, court-ordered therapy, and continuing education/training for staff. Due to fiscal constraints at the state level, flexible fund allocations were reduced statewide by 25%, from FY02 to FY03. In spite of this situation, many client services, particularly mental-health services, were maintained in FY03 as a result of funding from outside of Child Welfare.

The Core Service Agency made resources available for attachment and bonding studies for young children, and for in-home crisis intervention/stabilization services. The Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families provided funds from the Consolidated Youth Strategies Grant to pay for mental health services for young children.

In addition to the services provided to children and families directly by Child Welfare staff, a variety of agencies assisted children and families through contractual arrangements, using County funds. For example, through a contract with the National Children's Center for Families, community-based services were provided to families; and young first time mothers were mentored by more experienced mothers through a contract with the Mental Health Association MOMS program.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PAST YEAR

Accreditation

Child Welfare Services continued the extensive self study process necessary to become an accredited Child Welfare Agency. An integral part of the accreditation process is CQI (Continuous Quality Improvement) which underlies all of the accreditation standards. As a part of this process, staff developed a four-year strategic plan which identifies and supports major goals consistent with the mission, vision, and values of Child Welfare Services. To further continuous improvement we met regularly with a group of stakeholders to elicit their feedback and enhance collaborative efforts. The Cultural Competence Committee organized two conferences focusing on cultural issues and best practices. Quarterly peer record reviews by staff were implemented to improve the quality of service delivery and to identify exemplary practice. We have written service brochures emphasizing clients' rights and responsibilities and each employee has been issued a new Standard Operating Policies and Procedures Manual which reflects the best practices of accreditation. We plan to become accredited in 2004.

Staffing

Recruitment, and retention of staff continued to be a priority activity in CWS. 27 professional staff left during the past year and 21 new staff were hired, oriented and placed throughout the division. Five new supervisors were hired, most of whom were promoted from within the agency. Staff left CWS for a variety of reasons including pursuing personal goals, moving to another part of the country and changing careers.

90% of Child Welfare staff have Master of Social Work (MSW) degrees and are licensed in the state of Maryland. This is highly unusual in public child serving agencies.

Child Welfare Services expanded the orientation program for new staff. Direct service workers, supervisors and clerical staff receive over forty hours of knowledge-building presentations focusing on Child Welfare Service's mission, objectives, policies, services, operations and resources.

Child Assessment Center (CAC)

In a partnership with the Primary Care Coalition of agencies throughout the County, we began the development of the CAC. This is an effort to build a nationally accredited Assessment/Advocacy Center to serve children with serious physical and mental health problems related to child maltreatment. An Advisory group was formed and an Executive Director was hired. The Executive Director, funded by the Primary Care Coalition, spent most of her time searching for funding to develop the CAC.

Other Special Programs

This was the third year CWS received a Victims of Crime Assistance (VOCA) grant from the state. The grant focuses on services for the Latino population in Montgomery County, particularly serving sexually and physically abused children and their non-offending parent. The program helped provide translation, in-home services, and individual and group therapy.

In an effort to promote more active involvement of young fathers with their children, Child Welfare Services staff developed the Young Fathers/Responsible Father program. The program developed individualized services to help fathers overcome barriers to parental involvement and parental responsibilities.

Partnerships and Liaisons

- CWS maintains active partnerships with a large number of other agencies. One key partnership is with the Office of the County Attorney. There are five full time attorneys, three contract attorneys, a paralegal and two secretaries co-located with CWS staff. The attorneys help staff prepare for court hearings, review legal issues with staff, and represent CWS in both Juvenile and Circuit Court hearings.
- CWS staff work closely with the Montgomery County Police Department, the State Attorney's Office and the Department of Juvenile Services. These agencies are all at the Juvenile Assessment Center where some teams meet daily; all hold regularly scheduled weekly meetings.
- CWS has readily available the services of a variety of specialists some co-located from other programs and agencies:
 - The Income Support program has assigned and co-located a staff member who provides medical assistance enrollment for children coming into out of home care, and helps relatives and others apply for food stamps, rental assistance and other income support programs.
 - Drug abuse continues to be a major problem for many families in the CWS system, and therefore, a co-located substance abuse coordinator helps CWS staff diagnose and refer individuals to appropriate treatment.
 - One of the social workers has particular expertise in subsidized and low income housing resource; she maintains an active partnership with the local housing authority (HOC).
 - A full-time nurse provides regular health consultation to staff concerning physical injuries, medications, appropriate treatment and health care resources. A physician is available to provide routine health screenings for children requiring examination at the time of out of home placement.

In Praise of CWS and Its Staff

Child Welfare Services received special recognition for its efforts in a variety of ways:

Barbara Bonnin, a Child Welfare Assessment Supervisor, currently assigned the Accreditation Manager, was awarded the Outstanding Supervisor in Maryland by the Governor and the Governor's Council on Child Abuse and Neglect. The Governor and the Council also awarded the Outstanding Independent Living Program Youth Award to one of the Montgomery County youth.

Latinishia Boston, a social worker in the Continuing Protective Services Unit, was recognized by the Maryland Department of Human Resources as the Outstanding Social Worker in the State; she was featured in the DHR publication.

The "Adopt a Social Worker" program received a Montgomery's Best Award from the County Executive for the outstanding partnership formed to help children and families. The Court Liaison, Pamela Littlewood, and the County Attorneys received honorable mention for the Montgomery's Best award for their exceptional work in the Juvenile Court.

Nancy Lohman was named the outstanding supervisor in HHS by the Department. Her award was presented at the annual holiday celebration.

Child Welfare Services Outcome Measures for FY'03

- Reduce percentage of families receiving in-home services (Continuing Child Protective Services and Family Preservation Services) that do not have a child protective service investigation with an abuse or neglect indicated finding within one year after receiving services.
- Reduce percentage of families receiving in-home services (Continuing Child Protective Services and Family Preservation Services) that do not have a child protective service investigation with an abuse or neglect indicated finding while receiving services.
- Reduce percentage of children in foster/kinship care who are the victims of abuse or neglect, where the maltreater is the foster/kinship caregiver.
- Reduce percentage of children entering foster/kinship care that are re-entries.
- Increase percentage of children who leave foster/kinship care that are reunited with family, whose caregiver is awarded custody or guardianship, or who are placed for adoption.
- Increase percentage of children in foster/kinship care who are adopted or placed for adoption within 24 months of entry.
- Increase percentage of youth receiving Independent Living services who maintain a plan of self-sufficiency by remaining in high school, college, vocational training or full-time employment.

Interagency Collaborations

These are some of the community groups with which Child Welfare Services collaborates:

Addiction Services Coordination
 Addiction Task Force
 Adopt a Social Worker
 American Foundation for Latino Americans
 Blair Prototype Project
 Center for Adoption Support and Education (CASE)
 Court Appointed Special Advocate of Maryland
 Child Assessment Center Committee
 Child Fatality Review Committee
 Child Welfare League
 Citizens' Review Board
 Citizens' Review Panel
 Coalition for Healthy Maryland Children
 Coalition to Protect Maryland's Children
 Commission on Children and Youth
 Community Kids Resource Team
 Community Ministries
 Community Partnership
 Council of Governments (COG)
 County Executive's Domestic Violence Taskforce
 Department of Juvenile Justice/ Child Welfare
 Services Consultation Team
 Domestic Violence Alert Team
 Early Childhood Workgroup
 Expert Panel on Medical Assistance with Department
 of Health and Mental Hygiene
 Freddie Mac
 Friends in Action (FIA)
 Governor's State Council on Child Abuse and
 Neglect, Legislative Committee
 Healthy Families Montgomery
 High Risk Consultation Team
 Homeless Shelter Providers Team

Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC)
 Interagency Child In Need of Supervision (CINS)
 Workgroup
 Interagency Committee on Adolescent Pregnancy
 Juvenile Justice Commission
 Liaison to Mark Twain School
 Liaison to Shady Grove Hospital
 Local Coordinating Council
 Medical Assistance Advisory Board
 Maryland Hot Spot Communities
 Maryland's Children's Action Network
 Mental Health Workgroup
 Montgomery County Public School Truancy Review
 Board
 Montgomery County Public School Rights of
 Homeless Children to Education Committee
 Moms Offering Moms Support (MOMS)
 Montgomery County Child Care Resource and
 Referral Center
 Montgomery County Fetal and Infant Mortality
 Review Board
 Montgomery County Homeless Families Initiative
 Advisory Board
 Multicultural Community Partnership of Latino
 Interest
 National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI)
 Operation Runaway
 St Ann's Infant and Maternity Home
 United Charities Campaign
 Victims Of Crime Act (VOCA)
 Washington Assessment and Therapy Services
 (WATS)

Montgomery County Child Welfare Services Executive Staff

Agnes F. Leshner
Director
Tammy Chaney, Administrative Secretary

Louise Klein
Continuing Section Administrator
Roberta "Bert" Grisier, Administrative Secretary

James Mable
Out of Home Services Administrator

Pat Davis Spann
Resource Section Administrator
Phyllis Aikens, Administrative Secretary
Suzzette Robinson, Receptionist

Sheila Dennis
Assessment Section Administrator
Sandra Thompson, Administrative Secretary

Child Welfare Services Specialists

Barbara Bonnin, Accreditation Manager
Colleen Robichaud, Continuous Quality Improvement
(CQI) Manager
Denyse Fredriksson, Ombudsperson
Pam Littlewood, Court Liaison
Brenda Petersen, Health Care Coordinator

Cheryl Banks, Community Educator
Ann Burton, Chessie Coordinator and Accreditation
Betsy King, Appeals Coordinator
Nancy Doran, Addiction Services Liaison
Michelle Doane, Contracts & Child Support Liaison
Dorothy Otto, Medical Assistance Liaison

SCREENING UNIT

Supervisor: Salem Yohannes
Ilene Heiney,
Guity Adjoodani
Jeanne Davis

Kim Garrison
Diane Lininger
Arlene Markowicz
Olin Robinson

Don Roose
Erin Stillwell
Beth Turner
Michaelyn Woofert

ASSESSMENT UNIT TEAM I Calhoun Place

Supervisor: Teresa Kingfield
Cathy James
Roberto DeLeon

Malaysia Gresham
Traci Powell
Luz Shewell

Ron Weinreich
Jennifer Williams
Lisa Wolff

ASSESSMENT UNIT TEAM II

Supervisor: Gayle Emen
Marisa Lim
Cassandra Boyd

Jihan Hassan
Cynthia King
Julianne Murphy

Michelle Sears
Troy White

ASSESSMENT UNIT TEAM III

Supervisor: Nancy Lohman
LaCeilia Scott
Eric Brooks

Susan Gallucci
Bobbett Grey
Yonia Lazier

Sandra Lopez
Kristine Rodgers
Phoebe Shih

ASSESSMENT UNIT TEAM IV

Supervisor: Wendy Grier
Anne Brodsky
Agatha Chukwuezi

Vera Doukmajian
Heather Felsen
William Hopkins

Saskia Inwood
Lisa Merkin
Stephen Willis

ASSESSMENT UNIT (Sexual Abuse Unit) Calhoun Place

Supervisor: Anne Hoffman
Kia Williams
Amira Abdul-Wakeel

Janel Catron
Ann Gumula
Yvonna Love

Catherine Martinez
Nancy Patino
Karen Vaserman

ASSESSMENT UNIT (Family Preservation/Families Now Program)

Supervisor: Mary Shine
Loretta Bennett
Patricia Chapman
Elaine Gordon

Frandi Mars
Twana Brooks Page
Juana Paleologos
Angela Soto

Mike Stevens
Helen Vallejo-Cheng
Brad Wofford
Steve Zepnick

ASSESSMENT UNIT (Weekend/Holiday)

Jennifer Knotts
Jennifer Raynor

LaVoyce Reid
Rosemary Sheldon

CONTINUING UNIT I (Foster Care)

Supervisor: Cynthia Marshall
Wyntris Wells
Esther Forrest

Silvia Gorena
Nancy Menges
Livi Vaught

Debra Jewel
Vivian Waldon
JuaTina Temple

CONTINUING UNIT II (Foster Care, CPS, Family Preservation) Silver Spring

Supervisor: Muriel Anne Hesler
Patricia Williams
Jeff Craddock
Elizabeth Doonan

Jim Flaherty
Sandie Fowler
Sheri Laigle
Pamela Saunders

Jessica Sherman
Mirtha Verduguez
Susan Villegas
Karylena Valentin

CONTINUING UNIT III (Sex Abuse) Calhoun Place

Supervisor: Charly M. Mathew
Nancy Atikkan
Flo Ann Brown
Victoria Carballo

Joanna Duncan
Beth Taliaferro
Pilar Fuentes
Jonathan Ward

Tracy Boddy

CONTINUING UNIT IV (Foster Care)

Supervisor: Sandy Grijalva
Sherelle Hopkins
Alison Simpson
Risa Boswell

Blaine Clarke
Karen Crist
Tenneh Johnson
Jim Lee

Kate Smith
Annie Taschman
Wendy Hall-Page
Charles Jackson

CONTINUING UNIT V (Continuing Protective Services)

Supervisor: Diana Schofield
Chris Carmello
Teresa Cuellar
Latinisha Felli

Mindy Flax
Colm Gage
Rosario Grande
Debra Isenstein

Aimee Kopta
Avrah Mendelsohn

CONTINUING UNIT VI (Independent Living, Guardianship Program)

Supervisor: Sandra Kaufman
Myrtle Barrie

Gail Douglas
Maureen Kennedy

Felicite Adusei
Mende Martinez

CONTINUING UNIT VII (Treatment Foster Care)

Supervisor: Nathaniel Parks
Tina Perkins
Carolyn Rose

Bessie Defreitas
Edward Powell
Amy Morantes

RESIDENTIAL UNIT

Supervisor: Mitch Margolis
Loretha Dennis
Winston Clarke

Joyce Johnson
Al Kamara
Rebecca Rose

Rebecca Strub
Gregory Wallace
Claudia Segal

CONTINUING UNIT III (Foster Care, Family Preservation, CPS) Germantown

Supervisor: Joanne Milobsky
Susan Hensel
Doina Adam
Monica Durrani

Susana Eidelman
Carrie Gold
Carlos Gomez
John Hawkins

Sharon Jordan
Mohogany Pillay
Ivy Reed
Christine Rhodes

FOSTER & ADOPTIVE PARENT SERVICES

Supervisor: Angela Secundy
Ruta Bilmanis
Jeanne Booth
Soledad Calvo
Linda Gore

Marie Hill
Patricia Ihejurobi
Kathy Lynn
Shirley Scribner
Corinne Tolifon

Shari Zouhairi
Gwen Datt
Lissa Friedman
Lori Gloster
Marie Schwartz

ADOPTIONS UNIT

Supervisor: Cathy Robinson
Shekha Lutunga
Denise Anderson
Jodi Brucker
Helen Clark

Anne Marie Gardiner
Tiffany Jones
Diane Lopez
Davene Mathis
Maurice Miles

Rainell Miller
Claudia Thomas
Lori Weinstein

FISCAL UNIT

Jill Levine
Flora Frazier
Edna Henry

June Seckler

Montgomery County Child Welfare Services has four offices. The main office is on Piccard Drive and there are three regional offices. The regional offices are co-located with other Montgomery County Government programs.

Headquarters

1301 Piccard Drive, 4th Floor
Rockville, MD 20850
Phone: 240-777-3500
TTY: 240-777-3556

Juvenile Assessment Center

7300 Calhoun Place, Suite 400
Rockville, MD 20855
Phone: 240-777-3409
TTY: 240-777-3560

Germantown Regional Services Center

12900 Middlebrook Road, 2nd Floor
Germantown, MD 20874
Phone: 240-777-3346
TTY: 240-777-8002

Silver Spring Regional Services Center

8630 Fenton Street, 10th Floor
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Phone: 240-777-1438
TTY: 240-777-4320

Web Site

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov>